

## **Addendum 2**

### **FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY (FSS)**

## **FAMILIES ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN FSS**

Families eligible for participation in Family Self-Sufficiency will include those families that are currently leased under the OCHA Voucher Program. Participation in Family Self-Sufficiency is voluntary.

Families whose head of household is elderly, disabled, pregnant or a primary caregiver of children under the age of three will be allowed to participate in Family Self-Sufficiency if they are willing to seek and maintain employment or if there is someone in the household who is at least 18 years of age who can act as the Family Self-Sufficiency designated head of household who is willing to fulfill the requirements of Family Self-Sufficiency by seeking and maintaining employment.

## **FAMILY SELECTION**

The OCHA will select FSS families only from Section 8 Voucher participants.

The OCHA will survey Section 8 participants to determine interest in participating in the FSS program at least once. Other program marketing methods include:

- Soliciting new families at the time they are admitted to the housing program
- Soliciting families at annual reexamination
- Conducting additional surveys of participants
- Posting FSS information on the bulletin board of the OCHA office
- Providing an FSS briefing packet to families upon request or at certification or recertification
- Including FSS information in other mailings
- Providing an FSS packet at the front desk for review by families
- Holding meetings with other agencies and notifying them of the availability of FSS programs for Voucher participants

The OCHA may pursue additional allowable financial incentives.

The OCHA will utilize the following selection methodology for FSS participation:

- The date and time a family expressed interest in participating in FSS
- If a tiebreaker is needed, the date the family entered the Voucher Program as a participant will be used.

After the OCHA has tentatively selected families for the targeted and untargeted slots, the OCHA will use motivational screening factors to determine which families will actually be selected.

These factors include:

- Mandatory attendance at the Family Self-Sufficiency briefing;
- Mandatory attendance at the goals meeting.

Failure of the family to complete these tasks will result in the family not being selected to participate in the FSS program.

The OCHA will not use the following motivational screening factors:

Educational level  
Educational or standardized motivational test results  
Previous job history or job performance  
Credit rating  
Marital status  
Number of children  
Sensory or manual skills  
Discriminatory factors

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

Any motivational screening tasks must be easily accomplished by the family, based upon the family members' educational levels and any disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals with mobility, manual, sensory, speech impairments, mental or developmental disabilities.

The OCHA may decide that an accommodation is not reasonable if it causes undue financial and/or administrative burdens.

### **Missing Supportive Services**

If the OCHA determines, after consulting with the family, that a missing service is key to the family's needs, the OCHA will skip those families and offer the FSS slot to the next family for which there are available services.

If a missing service or group of services is consistently needed by applicants, the OCHA will try to locate resources to deliver the missing services.

The OCHA does not have to meet every need of a family if certain resources are not available and the service is not determined key to the family's needs.

If a family was skipped when it normally would have been selected because supportive services were unavailable, the OCHA will provide a non-targeted FSS slot selection preference to that family when the missing service becomes available.

### **DENIAL OF PARTICIPATION IN FSS**

The OCHA may refuse to select a family for participation in the FSS program if the family previously participated and did not meet its FSS obligations or was terminated from the FSS program.

The OCHA may deny FSS participation to a family if the family owes the public housing agency (PHA) (or another PHA) money in connection with the Section 8 program.

### **PROGRAM COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

The OCHA will use the collective coordinating body, comprised of representatives from the following Housing Authorities: Anaheim, Garden Grove, Santa Ana, and Orange County. At least one FSS participant representative from each Housing Authority will be included on the committee.

### **ESTABLISHING INTERIM AND FINAL GOALS**

The OCHA will work with the participating family members to devise an Individual Action Plan(s) for inclusion into the FSS Contract of Participation. Compliance with, and performance of, these interim and final goals will be measured during progress reviews to be held at least once annually between each participating family member and the OCHA.

## **ESCROW ACCOUNTS**

There is earned income received by an adult member of the family. An escrow credit worksheet will be completed at every required reporting period for annual and interim reexamination, including reexamination.

The OCHA will maintain a single depository account for all FSS families. These funds will be invested in one or more of the HUD approved investments. The total of the combined FSS account funds will be supported in the OCHA accounting records by a subsidiary ledger showing the escrow balance applicable to each FSS family.

Investment interest shall be credited quarterly to each participating family's FSS account, based on the balance in each escrow account at the end of the period for which the investment interest is prorated.

If the family has not reimbursed the OCHA for special claims paid to owners, has not paid rent to the owner at move-out, or has not reimbursed Housing Assistance Payments paid due to unreported income, the balance in the family's FSS account shall be reduced by that amount prior to prorating the interest income.

If there is unreported income, the OCHA will not credit the family's escrow account with any portion of the back rent.

The OCHA will advance to the FSS family a portion of the escrow account prior to completion of the Contract of Participation if the OCHA determines that the family has fulfilled certain interim goals and the family needs the funds to complete the contract.

The OCHA will advance to the FSS family a portion of the escrow account prior to completion of the Contract of Participation if the client requests that their Section 8 Voucher rental assistance be converted to Homeownership payments. Such advance must be utilized to help pay the 3% down payment requirement of the Homeownership Program and/or non-recurring closing costs of the real estate purchase.

The OCHA will allow the family to withdraw up to 75% of the family's escrow funds under these conditions when the funds are needed for the completion of higher education or job training in accordance with the Individual Action Plan(s) of the family or Homeownership. The approval of the withdrawal is at the sole discretion of the OCHA.

Families that leave the FSS program without completing the contract, violate the contract, or fail to comply with other program requirements will forfeit their portion of the FSS savings account funds.

If the family subsequently drops out of the FSS program without meetings its FSS obligations, the family will not owe the OCHA the amount of advanced escrow funds unless the advance payment was based on fraud or misinformation by the family.

If the head of the family dies and the remaining members of the family choose not to continue participating in the program and the family's Contract of Participation obligations have not been met, the escrow account will be forfeited.

If a family with two adults separates, the family member retaining the Voucher will receive the escrow, when applicable, if that family member was listed as head of household.

If the family member retaining the Voucher was not listed as head of the FSS family, that family member may designate himself or herself to receive the escrow as authorized by the FSS regulations.

## **CONTINUED REQUIREMENTS FOR FSS PARTICIPATION**

The OCHA will include the following tasks in the Individual Action Plan(s) as criteria to determine continued participation in the FSS program:

- Attendance at FSS orientation sessions or pre-selection interviews
- Completion of tasks, within the ability of the family to complete which indicate the family's willingness to undertake the obligations which may be imposed by the FSS Contract of Participation including:
  - Contacting job training services
  - Contacting educational referral services
  - Seeking and maintaining employment

Participating Family Self-Sufficiency families will be required to attend at least 2 group activities or meetings for group support, group networking, guest speakers and learning opportunities (e.g. parenting skills, budgeting skills, self esteem enhancement etc.) a year.

The family head must seek and maintain employment. The OCHA will terminate the family from the FSS Contract of Participation if the head does not seek and maintain employment as specified in the FSS Contract.

Seek employment is defined as:

- Looking for a job
- Applying for work
- Registering with the unemployment office
- Going on job interviews
- Following up on employment opportunities

The OCHA may terminate a family's FSS Contract of Participation if the family moved to a new location and was unable to fulfill its FSS obligations after the move.

The OCHA will terminate families from the FSS program if the family does not report all income as required.

The OCHA will not terminate families from the FSS program if the only FSS Contract violation is non-compliance with their lease.

## **EXTENSION FSS CONTRACT**

The OCHA may extend the FSS Contract under the following circumstances:

- Circumstances beyond the family's control such as serious illness, involuntary loss of job; and
- To allow families to meet the interim goal of remaining off welfare assistance for at least one year before the expiration of the contract.

Termination of employment because of nonperformance by the head of the family will not be justification of a contract extension.

## **PORTABILITY**

The OCHA may provide an FSS program selection preference, as Receiving Housing Authority, for portable FSS families, currently participating in the Initial Housing Authority's FSS program, at the time of admission. If the OCHA does not provide this selection preference at the time of admission, the OCHA may provide the preference at a later date.

If, as Receiving Housing Authority, the OCHA allows the portable family to participate in the FSS program, the OCHA will enter into a new FSS Contract of Participation for the remaining term on the contract with the Initial Housing Authority.

The Initial Housing Authority will maintain the FSS escrow account unless the family is absorbed by the Receiving Housing Authority. If the family is absorbed, the Initial Housing Authority will transfer the family's FSS escrow account to the Receiving Housing Authority.

The Housing Authority which is party to the FSS Contract of Participation will be responsible for monitoring the family's FSS status.

The Housing Authority operating the FSS program is responsible for determining whether the family has violated the Contract of Participation and whether the family's Section 8 assistance should be terminated.

If the family is terminated from the FSS program because it did not fulfill its Contract of Participation obligations, the funds in the escrow will be treated as program receipts of the Housing Authority maintaining the account.

An FSS family must lease an assisted unit within the jurisdiction of the Initial Housing Authority for a minimum period of 12 months after the effective date of the Contract of Participation.

## **CONTRACT COMPLIANCE**

The Family Services Coordinator or other designated OCHA representative will be responsible for evaluating the participating family members' compliance with the Family Self-Sufficiency Contract of Participation, including the Individual Action Plans.

When it is determined that the individual family members are not complying with any or all of the Contract of Participation, including the Individual Action Plan, the OCHA will provide the family with a written Violation Counseling Report, advising them of measures necessary to correct these actions. A follow-up evaluation will be done in 30 calendar days to determine compliance.

If compliance is still not met, the OCHA will provide the family with a final written Violation Counseling Report again advising them of measures necessary to correct these actions. A follow-up evaluation will be done in 30 calendar days to determine compliance.

If compliance is still not met, the OCHA will process the family for termination of the FSS Contract of Participation and notify the coordinating service providers of the family's termination from the Family Self-Sufficiency Program. The family's Section 8 housing assistance may not be terminated solely for noncompliance with the FSS Contract.

## **TERMINATION OF SECTION 8 ASSISTANCE**

The Housing Authority will not terminate Section 8 assistance if:

The head of the family is unable to seek and maintain employment as specified in the FSS Contract of Participation;

The head of the family is unable to locate employment during the Contract's five year/extended term;

The family is unable to meet/complete its FSS obligations.

The OCHA will generally not terminate Section 8 assistance if a family moved to a new location and was unable to fulfill its FSS obligations after the move. However, if a family is subject to termination in the FSS program because of failure to meet a Contract of Participation obligation, the family will not be allowed to use a portability move to avoid the consequences of the FSS failure to meet obligations. In this case, Section 8 assistance will be terminated.

The OCHA may terminate the FSS Contract without terminating Section 8 assistance.

#### **INFORMAL HEARING RIGHTS**

Section 8 FSS families are entitled to request an informal hearing for termination of FSS supportive services or Section 8 assistance.

